

1. (Amended) An isolated alpha-amylase [which is] selected from the group consisting of:
 - a) a polypeptide produced by *Bacillus sp.* NCIMB 40916, [or]
 - b) a polypeptide having an amino acid sequence as shown in positions 1-556 of SEQ ID NO: 4, [or]
 - c) a polypeptide encoded by the alpha-amylase encoding part of the DNA sequence cloned into a plasmid present in *Escherichia coli* DSM 13001 (NN049489), [or] and
 - d) [an analogue of the polypeptide defined in (a) or (b) which] a polypeptide that:
 - i) is at least 60 % homologous with [said] the polypeptide defined in (a) or (b), or
 - ii) is derived from [said] the polypeptide defined in (a) or (b) by one or more of substitution, deletion [and/]or insertion of one or more amino acids.
2. (Amended) An isolated alpha-amylase [which has] having an enzymatic activity at pH 10.5 [which] that is at least two times higher than the activity at pH 7.3 when measured at 37°C.
3. (Amended) An isolated alpha-amylase [which has] having an enzymatic activity at pH 9.5 [which] that is at least 4 times higher than the activity at pH 7.3 when measured at 37°C.
4. (Amended) The alpha-amylase of claim 1 [which] , wherein said alpha-amylase is derived from a strain of Bacillus[, preferably Bacillus sp. NCIMB 40916].
5. (Amended) The alpha-amylase of claim 1 [which] , wherein said alpha-amylase retains more than 90 % of its activity after 20 minutes incubation at 25°C in a solution of 3 g/l of a test detergent containing 20% sodium tripolyphosphate (STPP), 25% [Na₂SO₄] Na₂SO₄, 15% [Na₂CO₃] Na₂CO₃ , 20% linear alkylbenzene sulfonate (LAS), 5% [C₁₂-C₁₅] C₁₂-C₁₅ alcohol ethoxylate, 5% [Na₂Si₂O₅] Na₂Si₂O₅, 0.3% NaCl at pH 10.5 and 6 degrees German hardness, and retains less than 90 % of its activity after 20 minutes incubation at 30°C in the same solution.
6. (Unchanged) The alpha-amylase of claim 1 which has a molecular weight of about 55 kDa as determined by SDS-PAGE.
7. (Unchanged) The alpha-amylase of claim 1 which has an iso-electric point of about 5 as determined by isoelectric focusing.